




SPECIAL OFFER: Start the New Year with More Organizing Power

Posted By: CG Kennedy on 01/03/2018 09:00 AM

 Full Site
(<https://www.signupgenius.com/?useFullSite=true>)

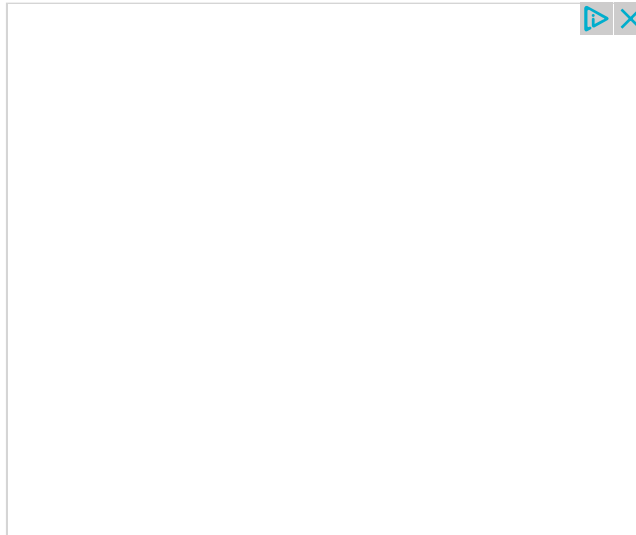


The fireworks have faded, the ball is dropped and resolutions are made. As you dive headfirst into 2018, SignUpGenius is here to equip you with more tools for simple group organizing. For a limited time, get our best annual deal on our premium plans — starting at just \$99 for a year. With our advanced tools, you can:

- Link multiple sign ups with tabbing (<https://www.signupgenius.com/blog/feature-tips-sign-up-tabbing.cfm>)
- Build and design customized sign up layouts (<https://www.signupgenius.com/blog/feature-tips-custom-theme-designs.cfm>)
- Text invites and reminders (<https://www.signupgenius.com/blog/feature-text-messaging.cfm>) to your entire group
- Eliminate ads (<https://www.signupgenius.com/blog/feature-no-ads-free-tips.cfm>) from your sign ups
- Add multiple administrators (<https://www.signupgenius.com/blog/feature-tips-multiple-administrators.cfm>) to your account
- Set specific start and stop dates/times (<https://www.signupgenius.com/blog/feature-tips-start-stop-dates.cfm>) on sign ups

Power organizers like you know the value of efficiently planned groups. Boost your productivity with these advanced tools and give yourself more time to do even more good.

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January Planning Checklist

Posted By: Erin Dunn on 01/02/2018 09:00 AM



A new year makes room for a fresh start. It's also the perfect time to get ahead on your group organizing and save yourself stress down the road. Use this checklist as a guide to what you should start planning this January. You'll thank yourself later.

Finalize Schedules Through the Spring

Many groups and responsibilities resume in January. Whether it's scheduling church volunteers () for the next few months or creating a reservation calendar () for the office conference room, planning ahead will pay dividends. **Genius Tip:** You can easily link sign ups that span multiple months using tabbing ().

Start Planning: Beginning of the month, even if you don't send all your sign ups out at once

Start a New Club

Check off some of your New Year's resolutions right away by forming a new group. Need an idea? Start by organizing a book club — it's easy to keep track of RSVPs, the host and snacks with a sign up (). Another simple, healthy idea is to start a neighborhood walking or running group. Share your sign up () on social

media to see who's interested in participating.

Start Planning: Beginning of the month — get your momentum going while others are feeling motivated in the new year as well

Organize Cookie Sales

Girl Scouts are out in full force at the beginning of the year selling their beloved cookies. Help your troop stay organized and maximize fundraising abilities by coordinating booth sign ups (). **Genius Tip:** See how these Raleigh, N.C., Girl Scout troops organized their cookie selling process with SignUpGenius () — and earned more money.

Start Planning: Beginning of the month, then send out sign ups at least two weeks in advance

Plan a MLK Service Day

Martin Luther King Jr. Day has become a holiday dedicated to serving others. If you're looking for service ideas, try these 20 ideas () to get started. Need something that takes a little less planning? Get your kids or a group of friends together to perform some of these 100 random acts of kindness ().

Start Planning: Beginning of the month (or sooner for a large effort)

Offer Tax Prep Help

The flood of W-2s and other tax documents at the beginning of the year will also mean a rush to accountants. It's simple to keep your business schedule organized with SignUpGenius. Create a sign up with available appointments (), and your clients will even receive reminder emails a couple of days ahead of time about their commitment.

Start Planning: The beginning of the month for the early birds

Celebrate the 100th Day of School

The 100th Day of School is a milestone for children and teachers alike, and it will usually fall between January and early February depending on your school calendar. Make the day a celebration of learning with these 50 ideas (). A classic: Ask students to each bring 100 of a small item (), whether it's acorns from their front yard or M&Ms.

Start Planning: Early to mid-month depending on when this falls for your school.

Prep for Pinewood Derby

An honored scouting tradition, Pinewood Derby will get your pack's competitive juices flowing. This will likely land in February, but as a leader, make sure you've handed out car kits and established rules early. Create a sign up () to recruit parent volunteers and judges and coordinate a snack schedule for the big night.

Start Planning: In mid-January so you have plenty of time to hold car-building workshops beforehand

Plan a Church Retreat

The quiet winter months are a great time to either finalize plans for a winter church retreat or get a head start on a spring one. You can organize volunteers or donations with a sign up — or ask attendees to register and pay on one simple sign up (). **Genius Tip:** If you need inspiration for programming, try these 60 church retreat planning ideas and themes ().

Start Planning: By mid-month to give yourself plenty of time for expert execution

Throw a Super Bowl Party

The big game is held the first Sunday in February, but you'll know two weeks ahead of time the two teams that have made it to the Super Bowl. Keep things simple with a sign up () that requests food such as appetizers or desserts. Plus, get an accurate headcount by collecting RSVPs online ().

Start Planning: Mid-month after the teams have been finalized

Get Ready for Valentine's Day Parties

Get ready for a sugar high and start planning your school's Valentine's Day party. Ask parents to send in treats with a sign up () or use the holiday as a fundraising opportunity and plan a school movie night ().

Genius Tip: These 20 films () are some of our favorite for the occasion.

Start Planning: Mid-month if you're having a more elaborate party or fundraiser or late January if it's a low-key class party

Go out and make the most of your clean slate this year. We can't wait to see the genius things you'll do!

Create a Sign Up (<https://www.signupgenius.com/index.cfm?go=w.create1>)

SignUpGenius Helps Youth Sports Photographer Organize Team Picture Day

Posted By: CG Kennedy on 12/28/2017 12:05 PM

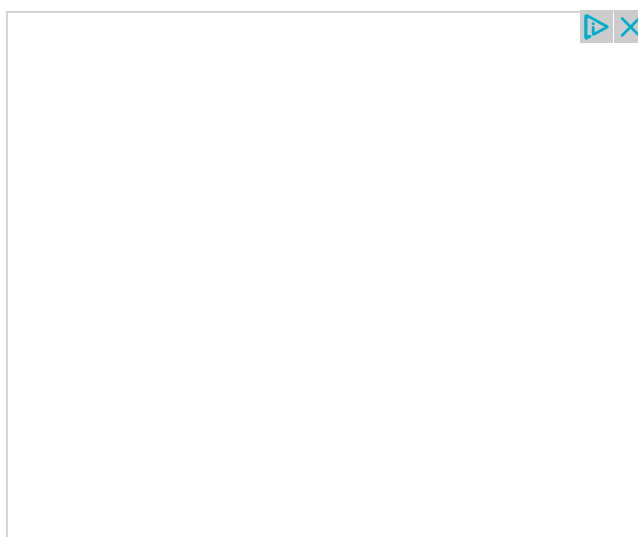


Corralling young athletes on picture day can take an entire team of skilled team coaches and parents.

Legends Event Photo is on a mission to make the process easier for little sluggers and their biggest fans by simplifying the scheduling process with SignUpGenius.

“SignUpGenius has allowed us to offer customers an easy, mobile way to sign up for specific photo services at some of our largest events,” says owner Kevin Cook. “In the past, we would typically have to wait until we got on site at an event before we could begin accepting sign ups for some of our photo services. Now, I create the SignUpGenius link and distribute it in a multitude of ways and by the time we arrive on site, I already have a list of customers ready to go!”

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Tools and Tips for an Organized New Year

Posted By: CG Kennedy on 12/28/2017 11:14 AM



A new year offers a fresh chance to sharpen your organizing skills! Break new ground with these tools and tips that will save you time and keep your groups organized – while connecting more people to causes that make a difference.

At Home

- Sit down and plan family activities (<https://www.signupgenius.com/family>) through the spring (at least) to maximize your time in the new year. If there are any events you're in charge of, make a reminder of when you need to create your online sign up by — sending invites out three to four weeks ahead of time is generally a good rule of thumb depending on the event.
- Save more time and pool your resources with neighbors and friends by coordinating a carpool (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080d45aaa928a6fd0-travel>) for games, school drop-offs, rehearsals or other activities.
- Do your best to start the year healthy (<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/healthy-new-year.cfm>) and avoid the flu (<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/tips-to-stay-healthy-during-flu-season.cfm>). Book doctor appointments for the year — and don't forget to incorporate healthy snack options (<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/50-yummy-snack-ideas-for-kids.cfm>) for your kiddos.
- Outline New Year's resolutions that you can actually accomplish (<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/newyearsresolutions.cfm>). You can teach your kids — and remind yourself — about the importance of setting measurable and achievable goals (<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/new-years-goal-setting-tips.cfm>).

At Work

- Plan ahead of the busy season at work. For instance, teachers can start organizing for the remainder of the school year (<https://www.signupgenius.com/school/organization-hacks-teachers.cfm>) now. You will thank yourself in April as end-of-year events begin to pile up!
- Running a small business or coordinating a group of clients? Collect payments (<https://www.signupgenius.com/collect-money>) and coordinate product sales or event registration at the same time with a sign up (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080d45aaa928a6fd0-mobile1>).
- Remember that healthy employees perform better. Start a corporate wellness program (<https://www.signupgenius.com/business/corporate-wellness-program-tips-ideas.cfm>) at your company and see dividends as the year progresses. **Genius Tip:** Organize corporate wellness perks (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f044daead2aabfd0-corporate>) in the new year with a sign up.
- Break up work routine by asking some get to know you questions in company meetings (<https://www.signupgenius.com/business/meetings-get-to-know-you-questions.cfm>).

In Groups

- Start building community in new groups that you join or lead this year. Children, adults and everyone in between can get to know each other better with this list of conversation starters (<https://www.signupgenius.com/groups/getting-to-know-you-questions.cfm>).
- Use a few fun icebreakers with your middle or high school students (<https://www.signupgenius.com/church/youth-group-icebreakers.cfm>) to spark friendships. When new groups form in church youth ministries or school clubs, it can be awkward for students to strike up a meaningful conversation.

- Bring members together with food! **Genius Tip:** Everything will run smoothly when you coordinate a potluck with a sign up (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080d45aaa928a6fd0-reunion>). Any group can benefit from a creative potluck party theme (<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/creative-potluck-themes.cfm>).
- Bring people together by resolving to help others. Use these 50 community service ideas (<https://www.signupgenius.com/nonprofit/community-service-ideas.cfm>) as a good starting point.

When you plan things well, you have more time for the things that matter. The SignUpGenius team wishes you a happy, healthy and organized new year!

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SignUpGenius Helps Fitness Trainer Organize Personal and Group Classes

Posted By: CG Kennedy on 12/19/2017 04:53 AM



Betsy Hoyt is practically Wonder Woman.

A personal trainer, nutrition coach and small group fitness instructor, Hoyt specializes in perinatal fitness, teen athletic conditioning, as well as senior citizen and de-conditioned adult training.

She started her personal training business, EDH Solutions, LLC, in 2015 with the purpose of “promoting the feminine genius through intentional fitness and nutrition.” She teaches the Pietra Fitness technique, a holistic “body and soul” exercise program.

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Genius Hack: Organize Sign Up Participants in Groups

Posted By: CG Kennedy on 12/15/2017 09:27 AM



Lots of things are better with a group — brunch, a game of Monopoly, flash mobs. With SignUpGenius, you can easily manage events by creating and inviting groups. Bring on the dance parties.

Create a New Group

To create a new group, click “Groups” from the left side of your account page. If you’ve already created sign ups, you’ll see a list of existing groups. Click the orange “Add New Group” button and enter a group name.

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SignUpGenius Helps Charlotte Choir Raise More Money at PGA Championship

Posted By: CG Kennedy on 12/05/2017 10:38 AM



With 200,000 spectators arriving for the PGA Championship at Quail Hollow Club, the Charlotte Chorale knew it had a big opportunity.

While the choir traditionally mans ice cream carts at the golf course’s annual Wells Fargo Championship to raise money, the arrival of one of golf’s four major championship meant much larger crowds — and the possibility to raise much more money.

That also meant coordinating more volunteers for more carts.

"Because this tournament was three times the size of the other golf tournaments, we needed three times as many volunteers," says group President Renee Downey. "We decided to use SignUpGenius because we needed an efficient way to manage over 100 volunteers."

SignUpGenius helped Charlotte Chorale raise three times as much money as usual — and helped Downey manage and communicate with volunteers in an effective and efficient manner.

"The most beneficial features were being able to send a group text (<https://www.signupgenius.com/blog/feature-text-messaging.cfm>) to all the volunteers, shift reminders to the volunteers, indicating which shifts were fully staffed or still needed volunteers, and being able to export the volunteer information (<https://www.signupgenius.com/blog/feature-tips-export-volunteer-reports.cfm>) into Excel," says Downey.

Throughout the years, the Charlotte Chorale has used proceeds from its fundraisers and performances to benefit organizations like Crop Walk, Avon Walk for Breast Cancer, KinderMourn, Musical Heirs, American Red Cross, USO of North Carolina, Hospitality House of Charlotte and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Charlotte.

SignUpGenius is happy to empower and support groups like the Charlotte Chorale that are using their voices for good. That's genius!

Collect Money with SignUpGenius (<https://www.signupgenius.com/collect-money>)

Genius Expert: Make the Most of Your Nonprofit Donor Relationships

Posted By: Erin Dunn on 11/29/2017 12:52 PM



Jeff Gordy is the co-Founder and CEO of Z2 Systems, Inc., the makers of NeonCRM (<https://www.neoncrm.com/>) for nonprofits. Since 2004, Jeff and his team have worked to build the optimal fundraising, CRM database and marketing solution for nonprofits. Before starting the company, Jeff worked for the Kidney Cancer Association, where he learned firsthand that nonprofits needed better software solutions.

SignUpGenius: What are the biggest mistakes you see nonprofits make when it comes to donor relationships?



Jeff Gordy

N (<https://sharecharlotte.org/about>)eonCRM (<https://www.neoncrm.com/>)

Gordy: Nonprofits need to take into account that donors are people with their own lives and nuances and quirks. They're not just a check that comes in the mail once a year or an online donation that came in on Giving Tuesday. By understanding who a donor actually is beyond just their donation, an organization will be able to build a real and sustainable relationship with them.

SUG: What type of donor data is most useful to see integrated in one place?

Gordy: In 2006, the Association of Fundraising Professionals and the Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy at the Urban Institute established the Fundraising Effectiveness Project to conduct research on fundraising effectiveness and help nonprofit organizations increase their fundraising results at a faster pace. While there's a lot of focus on retention by some software companies, the reality is that donor data needs to go beyond that. I recently outlined (<https://www.neoncrm.com/nonprofit-fitness-organization-health/>) the types of specific metrics a nonprofit should care about.

SUG: What are some key steps nonprofits can take to improve donor retention?

Gordy: Meaningful communication. The reality is that 53% of donors cite poor communication as the reason they don't give again to a nonprofit, so take a hard look at the types of messaging you're doing and ensure that it is donor focused, not focused on your organization.

By making the donor the hero in your appeals, you get them emotionally invested and therefore more open to giving again. The other key factor is ease of making a donation. If you have a confusing or frustrating process on your website for online donations or instructions for sending in a check, you're going to lose that person — no matter how passionate they are.

SUG: What stories should nonprofits be telling to spread news about their mission in the community?

Gordy: We've seen consistently that using authentic imagery and actual quotes from those affected by your mission will have a direct and positive impact on giving levels. The ability to be concise and strikingly visual is important.

We work with a lot of great consultants, and one of our favorites is Shuling Yong, a specialist in video storytelling. As she says, “When you evoke emotion in your communications, your message will stick more easily.”

SUG:  **Any tips for annual planning as nonprofits wrap up the year and start charting a path for the next one?**      

Gordy: Keep track of your successes and your areas for improvement. The ability to set benchmarks for success based on past data is something that sometimes gets lost in the mad rush of giving that comes in the last few weeks of the year.

Our staff member Tim Sarrantonio ran an annual campaign that brought in over \$2 million and actually wrote about this in an ebook (<https://www.neoncrm.com/reflecting-on-your-annual-fund/>) we put out because so many nonprofits struggle with this exact question.

Thanks to Jeff for sharing his expertise. Learn more about how you can connect your Neon CRM and SignUpGenius accounts with Zapier integrations.

Learn More (<https://www.signupgenius.com/zapier>)

SignUpGenius Gives Back on Giving Tuesday

Posted By: Kate White on 11/28/2017 04:06 AM



After the shopping bags settle from Black Friday and Cyber Monday, it's time to turn toward a noble cause — giving back to our communities. This Giving Tuesday, SignUpGenius team members chose to do our part by serving several key partners and charities in our hometown of Charlotte, N.C. Additionally, we made a donation of \$12,500 to each of the following organizations:

- Samaritan's Purse (<https://www.samaritanspurse.org/>), a Boone, N.C.-based nonprofit that provides international relief services to victims of war, poverty, natural disaster and disease. The nonprofit is known for its Operation Christmas Child shoebox distribution.

- Brookstone Schools (<https://brookstoneschools.org/>) in Charlotte, a growing K-8 school that provides a private Christian education for financially challenged families.
- Christian Adoption Services (<https://christianadopt.org/>) in Matthews, N.C., a nonprofit that places domestic and foreign-born children with adoptive Christian families.
- African Christians Fellowship International (<https://www.africanchildsponsorship.com/home/83.cfm>), a nonprofit that helps indigent and orphaned children in Liberia, West Africa.

We are inspired and honored to be able to support each of these organizations and help them continue their good work serving vulnerable children. Thank you for all you've done to make Giving Tuesday a success. It's organizing geniuses like you that truly change the world!

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Plan the Ultimate Holiday Party

Posted By: CG Kennedy on 11/24/2017 03:13 AM



Hark! The season of holiday parties has arrived! Follow our preparation tips for a simply genius party filled with joy and peace.

Send Festive Invitations and Reminders

- Send a themed invitation with RSVP options (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080d45aaa928a6fd0-lexcorp>) a few weeks in advance so guests can respond with plenty of time to spare. You can ask guests to contribute a potluck dish and collect RSVPs (<https://www.signupgenius.com/blog/feature-tips-rsvp-online-invitations.cfm>) on one simple sign up.
- Throwing a school holiday party (<https://www.signupgenius.com/school/class-party.cfm>)? Recruit parent volunteers to contribute to party supplies and snacks (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080d45aaa928a6fd0-winter>), and send automatic custom reminders (<https://www.signupgenius.com/blog/feature-custom-reminders-confirmations.cfm>) so no one forgets their gingerbread!
- Think outside the box with a creative holiday party theme

(<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/holidaypartythemes.cfm>) that will help guide decorations and food. Christmas character party, anyone?

Plan the Perfect Party

- All good parties start with the proper planning. Refer to this printable checklist (<https://signupgenius.com/pdfs/christmas-holiday-open-house-checklist.pdf>) to make sure you've accounted for everything, from serving dishes to where guests will drop their coats.
- If you're hosting a holiday potluck (<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/christmas-potluck-ideas.cfm>), make sure to plan a general menu guideline ahead of time, and create a potluck sign up (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080d45aaa928a6fd0-christmas>) that allows each guest to choose an item to contribute.
- Prepare for hosting a cookie exchange (<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/host-a-cookie-exchange.cfm>) by requesting guests bring copies of their cookie recipes to swap!

Host a Merry Good Time

- Plan for a few Christmas (<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/christmas-party-games.cfm>) or Hanukkah party games (<https://www.signupgenius.com/church/hanukkah-games-activities.cfm>) that can be both meaningful and fun.
- When your party guests arrive, break the ice with some hilarious holiday would you rather questions (<https://www.signupgenius.com/groups/would-you-rather-holiday-questions.cfm>).
- Start thinking about easy gifts for your co-workers (<https://www.signupgenius.com/business/coworkergifts.cfm>) at the company party or thoughtful Hanukkah gifts (<https://www.signupgenius.com/home/hanukkahgifts.cfm>) for all eight days. Consider throwing a gift-wrapping party with friends. (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080d45aaa928a6fd0-gift>)

The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear. Getting organized early will help you enjoy more of the holiday magic!

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